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PRESS RELEASE

THE EDWARD M. KENNEDY CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE ARTS ESTABLISHED IN DHAKA

DHAKA, JULY 14 -- In partnership with the Liberation War Museum, the American Center of U.S. Embassy Dhaka announces the launch of the Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service and the Arts (EMK Center) in Dhanmondi, Dhaka. The mission of the EMK Center is “to engage, inspire, connect, and empower citizens of all ages to better themselves, their communities, and our world.”

The EMK Center honors the men and women who fought for Bangladesh’s independence in 1971 and U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who came to Bangladesh in 1972 to extend the hand of friendship. The EMK Center recognizes and encourages the work of today’s youth and defines public service as “service on behalf of the people – by anyone, anywhere, anytime.”

This modern, welcoming space is equipped with wifi access, a café, classrooms, a resource and reference room, and a lounge area, all of which are available to members of the EMK Center who may join for an annual fee of 1000 taka.

At the launch ceremony on July 14, American Center Director Lauren Lovelace said: “After three years, this dream is a reality. We are grateful to the U.S. Department of State for providing more than \$1 million in resources to start the Edward M. Kennedy Center. We are honored to partner with the Liberation War Museum and to join with them in building a space that remembers U.S. Senator Kennedy and the longstanding friendship between Bangladeshis and Americans. We are also inspired by the work and the vision of young Bangladeshis and we hope that this center will be an institutional resource that grows with them.”

In addition to American Center Director Lauren Lovelace, U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena, U.S. Department of State Coordinator of the Bureau of International Information Programs Dawn McCall, U.S. Department of State Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Jim Moore, and Senior Advisor for Education Molly Teas attended the launch together with representatives from throughout Bangladeshi society to support the EMK Center.

The Edward M. Kennedy Center will open to the public in September 2012. Until then, the EMK Center will be open by invitation only. For more information, please contact EMK Center Director M. K. Aaref at info@emk.com.bd or the American Center staff at DhakaPA@state.gov.

Photos and statements from the EMK Center launch may be found at <http://www.facebook.com/bangladesh.usembassy> or at www.emk.com.bd.

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